



**U.S. Department of Justice**

*United States Attorney  
District of Maryland*

*Thomas M. DiBiagio  
United States Attorney*

*Vickie E. LeDuc  
Public Information Officer*

*6625 United States Courthouse  
101 West Lombard Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21201-2692*

*410-209-4800  
TTY/TDD: 410-962-4462  
410-209-4885  
FAX 410-962-3091  
Vickie.LeDuc@usdoj.gov*

**April 18, 2003  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**FOR FURTHER  
INFORMATION CONTACT  
Vickie LeDuc, AUSA  
(410) 209-4885**

**BYERS SENTENCED TO 35 YEARS FOR VIOLENT DRUG CONSPIRACY**

**Baltimore, MD** - Thomas M. DiBiagio, United States Attorney for the District of Maryland, announced today that Charles Byers, age 25, of Baltimore, Maryland was sentenced today by United States District Judge J. Frederick Motz to 35 years imprisonment, followed by 5 years of supervised release, after pleading guilty to count one of the superseding indictment in which he was charged with conspiracy to distribute cocaine, heroin and cocaine base between 1995 and 2001.

According to the statement of facts, from at least 1995 and through July 2001, Byers was a leader of a conspiracy to distribute heroin, cocaine and cocaine base (crack) in East Baltimore with a group of co-conspirators, sometimes known the Project Boys or L.A. Boys, as most of the members were originally from the Lafayette Homes Housing Project. Byers and his co-conspirators distributed heroin, cocaine and cocaine base first in the Lafayette and Douglas Housing projects and later, from the late 1990's through July 2001, in the vicinity of Washington and Lafayette, Lafayette and Chapel and Lafayette and Castle, North Avenue and Washington, in East Baltimore, and in West Baltimore, including drugs shops in the vicinity of Pennsylvania and Gold.

According to the statement of facts, in the Fall of 2000 a dispute arose between the Project

Boys and another east-side drug trafficking group, known as the North Avenue Boys. The dispute led to a series of shootings and retaliatory shootings between the rival groups, resulting in the deaths of five people, including Lakeisha Moten who was killed on Memorial Day 2001 when a group of North Avenue Boys and their associates were shot at by several Project Boys while attending a memorial party held at 2032 E. North Avenue, the scene of an earlier shooting in November 2000. Eleven other people were also shot in the Memorial Day shooting.

In January 2001, Byers and eleven of his associates were indicted by a federal grand jury. To date, ten have entered guilty pleas and are pending sentencing in federal court.

This case was investigated by federally deputized detectives from the Baltimore City Police Homicide Unit assigned to the DEA and federal agents from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys John F. Purcell and Andrew G.W. Norman.